BCPharmaCare Newsletter *November 7, 2008 Edition 08-010*

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VETERINARY PRESCRIPTIONS – IMPORTANT REMINDER

When dispensing veterinary medications, never assign a PHN to an animal. Instead, use the PHN of the pet's owner.

To prevent the drug from adjudicating on PharmaNet and to ensure the drug will not appear on the pet owner's patient record:

- Use the **veterinarian's licence number** as the Practitioner Identification (Pract. ID)
- Use **V9** as the Reference Code

Following the above requirements also ensures that the veterinary prescription will not affect Drug Utilization Evaluation (DUE) results for the pet's owner.

The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment.
Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete.
The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient.
Health care professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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ABOUT THE PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Under the leadership of Assistant Deputy Minister Bob Nakagawa, Pharmaceutical Services works to improve health by promoting the most effective use of prescription drugs. To do this, we consult with the public and stakeholders, educate doctors and patients about the best drug treatments, carefully select which drugs to cover, and make thoughtful decisions on how to distribute coverage.

Each of our five branches is a skilled team dedicated to a specific aspect of our work:

Drug Intelligence	Eric Lun, Executive Director	**The best drugs**—Not all drugs are created equal. This branch decides which drugs PharmaCare will cover, making sure that each drug supports better health and offers good value for taxpayers.
Drug Use Optimization	Suzanne Taylor, Executive Director	**The best prescribing**—To make the best choices, health care professionals and patients need good information about drug treatments. This branch promotes wise drug use through education, through drug use evaluations and through other projects.
Policies, Outcomes Evaluation, and Research	Darlene Therrien, Executive Director	**The best policies**— We need to make sure PharmaCare will always be there for people in need. This branch researches, reviews and analyzes policy options to offer B.C. residents the best coverage. It also keeps residents informed of current policy.
Stakeholder and Partner Relations	Paul Gudaitis, Executive Director	**The best relations**—We need to know what taxpayers want from their provincial drug program and how best to work with stakeholders to deliver it. This branch develops relationships with the public and stakeholders that are meaningful and productive.
Business Management, Supplier Relations & Systems	Paul Mochrie, Executive Director	**The best deals**—Getting better prices from companies that make drugs allows us to afford more new therapies with the available resources. This branch develops strategies to get good value for our investment.

NEW DIRECTOR OF PHARMANET

Pharmaceutical Services is pleased to welcome Sorin Pop as its Director, PharmaNet. Sorin will oversee the development and management of operational policies, projects and issues related to the PharmaNet system.

Sorin joined the Ministry of Health Services in April 2008. His previous experience includes implementation of enterprise applications and management of software development teams. Sorin has a degree in engineering and an MBA in entrepreneurship.

PROSTHETICS AND ORTHOTICS—CHANGE TO PRE-APPROVAL LIMIT AND PRICE LIST REVIEWS

Effective **November 1, 2008**, two changes were made to the Prosthetics and Orthotics Program. These changes were made in consultation with the Prosthetic and Orthotic Association of British Columbia.

Change to pre-approval limit

The limit at which prosthetic and orthotic claims require pre-approval was increased from $200 to $400.

Pre-approval is a key element of the Prosthetic and Orthotic Program and will remain in place. However, increasing the limit at which pre-approval is required helps to streamline administrative processes for all health care providers.

Prosthetic and orthotic suppliers should note that all claims, whether manual or online, must still conform to PharmaCare policy before being submitted and all claims remain subject to audit. In the coming months, PharmaCare will monitor the number of claims to ensure there is no unexpected increase in the volume or value of claims as a result of this change.

Price list reviews

The price list will be reviewed regularly and adjusted as needed based on the posted close-of-business U.S. Exchange rate published by the Bank of Canada (available at www.bank-banque-canada.ca/en/rates/exchange-look.html). In times of significant fluctuation, the rates will be reviewed and adjusted whenever the rate changes more than five cents and remains at a variance of five cents or more for a minimum of five working days. The price list will be adjusted to reflect the change. The effective date will allow time for suppliers to change their prices and forward requests for review.

As a result, the current price list has been updated based on the Bank of Canada closing rate for October 20, 2008, to $1.1937. The revised price list will be in effect November 5, 2008, for the Prosthetic and Orthotic Committee meeting.

Pharmaceutical Services looks forward to continued work with the Prosthetic and Orthotic Association of British Columbia on other proposed changes.

SPECIAL SERVICES FEES

The number of Special Services fees that PharmaCare paid, monthly, over the past year:

Oct 2008	3,309	Apr 2008	2,656
Sep 2008	2,972	Mar 2008	2,242
Aug 2008	2,373	Feb 2008	2,241
Jul 2008	2,905	Jan 2008	2,393
Jun 2008	2,689	Dec 2007	3,623
May 2008	2,696	Nov 2007	3,782

METHADONE FOR OPIOID DEPENDENCY

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia, as part of its regulatory mandate, monitors physicians' prescribing of methadone for opioid dependency. When the College authorizes a physician to prescribe methadone and/or buprenorphine for opioid dependency, the information is entered on PharmaNet.

Please note that these College-authorized physicians no longer require PharmaCare Special Authority to prescribe methadone for opioid dependency at the 2mg/ml concentration.

PharmaCare provides coverage of methadone for maintenance* under the Drug Identification Numbers (DINs) or Product Identification Numbers (PINs) below:

Product	Interaction	DIN/PIN
Methadone 1 mg/ml	involving direct interaction with patient	66999990
Methadone 1 mg/ml	with no direct interaction with patient	66999991
Methadone 2 mg/ml	with no direct interaction with patient	66999992
Methadone 2 mg/ml	involving direct interaction with patient	66999993
Buprenorphine hcl 0.4 mg tablet	with no direct interaction with patient	2242962
Buprenorphine hcl 0.4 mg tablet	involving direct interaction with patient	66999994
Buprenorphine hcl 2 mg tablet	with no direct interaction with patient	2242963
Buprenorphine hcl 2 mg tablet	involving direct interaction with patient	66999995
Buprenorphine hcl 8 mg tablet	with no direct interaction with patient	2242964
Buprenorphine hcl 8 mg tablet	involving direct interaction with patient	66999996

* Information on the correct PINs for methadone for the treatment of pain can be found in Section 6.3.2 of the PharmaCare/PharmaNet Policies and Procedures manual.

LOW COST ALTERNATIVE (LCA) / REFERENCE DRUG PROGRAM (RDP) BOOKLET—CHANGES

Effective **December 9, 2008**, the following LCA categories (including both existing and new PharmaCare benefits) will be revised.

Category		New LCA Price	New LCA Status
TIMOLOL XE DRP 0.5%			
2290812	APO-TIMOP (gel formulation)		F
2242276	TIMOLOL MALEATE-EX		F
2171899	TIMOPTIC-XE	2.8335	P

F – Fully covered P – Partially covered

LCA/RDP BOOKLET CHANGES, CONTINUED

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following newly-approved benefits have been added to existing LCA/RDP categories as eligible benefits for Plans B, C, F, Fair PharmaCare, and, if applicable, Plan G. (For the Plan G formulary, please visit the Special Authority Information page on the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme.)

DIN	DRUG NAME	RDP	LCA STATUS	SPECIAL AUTHORITY ONLY
2293358	APO-GABAPENTIN 600 mg tablet		P	
2293366	APO-GABAPENTIN 800 mg tablet		P	
2310279	GEN-VENLAFAXINE 37.5 mg tablet		P	
2310287	GEN-VENLAFAXINE 75 mg tablet		P	
2310295	GEN-VENLAFAXINE 150 mg tablet		P	
2299372	RAMIPRIL 1.25 mg capsule (Laboratoire Riva)		P	
2255316	RAMIPRIL 2.5 mg capsule (Laboratoire Riva)		P	
2255324	RAMIPRIL 5 mg capsule (Laboratoire Riva)		P	
2255332	RAMIPRIL 10 mg capsule (Laboratoire Riva)		P	
2266539	SANDOZ CLARITHROMYCIN 250 mg tablet		P	
2266547	SANDOZ CLARITHROMYCIN 500 mg tablet		P	
2303655	SANDOZ RISPERIDONE 0.25 mg tablet		P	
2303663	SANDOZ RISPERIDONE 0.5 mg tablet		P	

P – Partially covered

New LCA Categories

The following drugs (including both existing and new PharmaCare benefits) will be included as new LCA categories on PharmaNet, effective **December 9, 2008**.

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
FENTANYL PATCH 12MCG	2280345	DURAGESIC	P*	3.3192
	2311925	RATIO FENTANYL	F*	
PANTOPRAZOLE SODIUM TAB 40MG	2292920	APO-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2300486	CO-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2299585	GEN-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2285487	NOVO-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2229453	PANTOLOC	P*	1.4218
	2307871	PMS-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2305046	RAN-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2308703	RATIO-PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
	2301083	SANDOZ PANTOPRAZOLE	F*	
VALACYCLOVIR HYDROCHLORIDE TAB 500MG	2295822	APO-VALACYCLOVIR	F	
	2298457	PMS-VALACYCLOVIR	F	
	2219492	VALTREX	P	2.6407

F – Fully covered
P – Partially covered
F* – Drug is a full benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.
P* – Drug is a partial benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

BENEFITS

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plans B, C, F, Fair PharmaCare and, if indicated below, Plan G and/or Plan P.

DIN	DRUG NAME	PLAN G	PLAN P
2305003	GEN-CLOZAPINE 50 mg tablet	Y	N
2305011	GEN-CLOZAPINE 200 mg tablet	Y	N

NON-BENEFITS

The following products have been reviewed and will not be added as benefits under PharmaCare.

DIN	DRUG NAME
2292912	APO-PANTOPRAZOLE 20 mg tablet
2285479	NOVO-PANTOPRAZOLE 20 mg tablet
2305038	RAN-PANTOPRAZOLE 20 mg tablet
2308681	RATIO-PANTOPRAZOLE 20 mg tablet
2301075	SANDOZ-PANTOPRAZOLE 20 mg tablet